



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER OF PATENTS AND TRADEMARKS
Washington, D.C. 20231
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/734,601	12/13/2000	William Possidento		3613

7590

11/27/2002

LAW OFFICE OF JOHN P. HALVONIK
15200 SHADY GROVE ROAD, SUITE 202
GAITHERSBURG,, MD 20850

EXAMINER

FERNSTROM, KURT

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3712

DATE MAILED: 11/27/2002

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/734,601

Applicant(s)

POSSIDENTO, WILLIAM

Examiner

Kurt Fernstrom

Art Unit

3712

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 09 September 2002.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 5-8 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 5-8 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on 09 September 2002 is: a) ☒ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

Art Unit: 3712

DETAILED ACTION

Drawings

1. The proposed drawing correction and/or the proposed substitute sheets of drawings, filed on September 9, 2002 have been approved. A proper drawing correction or corrected drawings are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. The correction to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

2. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

3. Claims 5-7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Midgley in view of Gaines. Midgley discloses in Figures 6 and 7 and in column 3, lines 37-51 a teaching apparatus comprising a board 30 having the periodic chart displayed thereon, including a main section having a 3x18 array and upper sections having a 2x2 and a 2x6 array, and means for accommodating cards 25 having information thereon pertaining to the chemical elements which may be placed on the board. Midgley fails to disclose that the pieces 25 have a cubic shape. Gaines discloses a teaching device comprising a plurality of cubes which represent chemical

Art Unit: 3712

elements. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the relevant art to modify the device disclosed by Midgley by providing cube shaped pieces to represent the elements rather than cards for the purpose of providing three dimensional representations of the chemical elements and for the purpose of allowing the user to more easily manipulate the pieces.

4. Claim 8 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Midgley in view of Gaines, and further in view of Hun. Midgley as viewed in combination with Gaines discloses all of the limitations of claim 8 with the exception of the information pertaining to electronic configuration of the elements. It is well known to provide such information in teaching devices. Hun discloses on Figure 1 and on page 2, lines 75-119 a teaching device comprising pieces representing the elements, whereby each piece has information thereon relating to electronic information. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the relevant art to modify the device disclosed by Midgley as viewed in combination with Gaines by providing information pertaining to electronic configuration of the elements on the pieces for the purpose of providing additional educational information to the device.

Response to Arguments

5. Applicant's arguments filed on September 9, 2002 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. In response to applicant's argument that there is no suggestion to combine the references, the examiner recognizes that obviousness can only be established by combining or

Art Unit: 3712

modifying the teachings of the prior art to produce the claimed invention where there is some teaching, suggestion, or motivation to do so found either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art. See *In re Fine*, 837 F.2d 1071, 5 USPQ2d 1596 (Fed. Cir. 1988) and *In re Jones*, 958 F.2d 347, 21 USPQ2d 1941 (Fed. Cir. 1992). The motivation to modify a teaching does not need to come from the primary reference itself. In this case, the modification to provide cubes comes from the Gaines patent, which discloses a plurality of cubes, which are simple and sturdy and easy to manipulate.

In response to applicant's argument that the cubes of Gaines would not be supported by the board structure of Midgley, the test for obviousness is not whether the features of a secondary reference may be bodily incorporated into the structure of the primary reference; nor is it that the claimed invention must be expressly suggested in any one or all of the references. Rather, the test is what the combined teachings of the references would have suggested to those of ordinary skill in the art. See *In re Keller*, 642 F.2d 413, 208 USPQ 871 (CCPA 1981). In this instance, modification of the device disclosed by Midgley by providing the cubes of Gaines would inherently result in modification of the board to support cubes. Such boards are well known, as shown for example by the lid of the box disclosed by Gaines, which can be positioned vertically and contains means for supporting the cubes such that the cubes may be rotated.

Art Unit: 3712

Conclusion

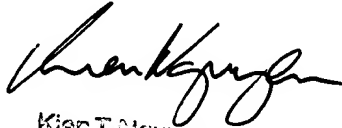
6. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

7. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Kurt Fernstrom whose telephone number is (703) 305-0303.

KF

November 20, 2002


Kien T. Nguyen
Primary Examiner